



**ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
FOR  
CIVIL RIGHTS**

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
FISCAL YEARS  
2005-2010**

**March 2006 rev.**

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS**

I am pleased to present the first unified Strategic Plan for the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR). Nearly a year in the making, this plan integrates and aligns the five program areas within ASCR under one strategic mission goal, placing a strong emphasis on performance measurement and results.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) seven mission areas have varied responsibilities and management challenges. The approximately 100,000 individuals who comprise USDA's permanent, temporary, seasonal, and intermittent workforce are critical for USDA to achieve its mission, programs, and strategic goals. Through this Strategic Plan, ASCR will provide civil rights leadership and services for all mission areas, agencies and offices within USDA in a manner that blends and balances the individual differences of the people who comprise this Department, in an environment free from discrimination, harassment, intolerance and reprisal. Whether it is our protection of America's animal and plant resources, the improvement of health through a safe food supply, or the stewardship of our Nation's national forests and rangelands, America demands and deserves the best from USDA. ASCR plays an important role in helping USDA achieve its varied mission objectives by promoting practices that allow all workers and citizens to achieve their highest potential.

The ASCR Strategic Plan brings together the mission responsibilities of ASCR's five program offices in an integrated manner. The plan consists of one strategic enterprise goal and program specific supporting objectives so that every employee can see how the jobs they do contribute to fulfilling our overall mission. Performance targets and outcomes provide the gauge by which we measure our success in achieving results year by year. These efforts require a management focus that provides value to those who receive our services, maintains accountability, and integrates our activities to avoid duplication and overlap.

We relied on input from a variety of internal and external customers to produce this plan and establish our unified strategic direction. The ultimate responsibility for its execution, however, remains with us. We look forward to carrying out our responsibilities for the benefit of USDA through our Strategic Plan.

**Vernon B. Parker**  
**Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of strategic planning is to ask important questions about the future. What will the future look like in 5 years? What will the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights need to do to succeed? How will we know if we have been successful? What are the challenges we will be facing? Will we be ready for those challenges?

The ASCR Strategic Plan is the answer to these questions. The Plan establishes one unified goal that places emphasis on fair and equitable services and benefits to USDA customers while upholding the civil rights of its employees, with supporting programmatic objectives. These objectives contain the indicators we need to achieve our goal, with critical timelines, and defined methods to determine our success. There is no way to predict the future, but it is possible to identify and forecast the forces of change shaping the Department and the challenges facing ASCR in helping the Department meet its mission, objectives and management initiatives.

This strategic plan is ASCR's response to the identification of those challenges. The plan takes an enterprise approach while focusing on results: indicators with measurable performance metrics. It is a fluid and flexible document capable of adapting to changing programmatic priorities.

Over the next five years we will concentrate on meeting the objectives identified in our strategic plan. We will strengthen our partnerships with 1890 and 1994 Land-Grant Institutions and community-based organizations. We will work closely with our agency and office partners in ensuring that the Department increases the number of national scholars from the pool of talented applicants that we will devise. We will conduct workshops and provide technical assistance to the 1890 and 1994 communities so that they fully understand the benefits of partnering with USDA.

We will work to achieve a more efficient outreach program for all customers, with emphasis on socially and economically disadvantaged persons, with assistance from the Outreach Planning Working Group. The ASCR will work proactively to strengthen its partnerships with community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions, as well as create new partnerships with these entities.

The importance of an environment that allows all employees to be successful in meeting the Department's objectives cannot be understated. To that end, the ASCR will better inform the workforce of the benefits of alternative methods of resolving workplace and programmatic disputes.

ASCR has important regulatory oversight responsibilities. Therefore, we will work toward ensuring agencies and offices understand the various statutes and regulations that govern alternative dispute resolution, civil rights and equal employment opportunity (EEO), and that they receive assistance in complying with these authorities. We also have legally mandated and regulatory timelines for completing actions associated with both EEO and program discrimination complaints. Those regulatory timelines will be met while reducing processing times and improving efficiency.

Our employees are pivotal to assuring our success in accomplishing all that we have set out to do in the next five years. It is imperative that our employees possess the necessary skills to be successful. Our executives and managers play critical roles in achieving results and ensuring that their staff is fully aware of their responsibilities for carrying out the strategic plan. We will also upgrade technology as necessary to meet performance targets and measure results. It is the Strategic Plan and the metrics we established to gauge our success that will allow us to adjust and modify our strategies so that we can continue to deliver the best possible performance for the employees and customers of USDA.

## **MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

We provide leadership to promote equal opportunity, equal access, and fair treatment for all USDA employees and customers.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

To be recognized as strategic partners, change agents, civil rights advocates, and highly effective leaders supporting the USDA mission.

### **VALUES**

To carry out our mission, vision and strategic goals, ASCR employees will be guided by the values outlined below as they provide leadership in promoting equal opportunity, equal access and fair treatment for all USDA customers and employees:

- ❖ We value our customers – both internal and external
- ❖ We value upholding the civil rights of all USDA employees and customers
- ❖ We value outstanding service and professionalism
- ❖ We value clear communication
- ❖ We value meeting customer expectations in a timely manner
- ❖ We value confidentiality and fairness
- ❖ We value teamwork and collaboration

## STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The USDA Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years (FY) 2005-2007, Civil Rights policies, USDA Human Capital Plan for FY 2003-2007, the President's Management Agenda, USDA Annual Performance Plan, and the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, provided the framework for the creation of the ASCR Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2005-2010.

On March 7, 2003, USDA established the position of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. The establishment of this position was the result of a transfer of functions from Departmental Administration to the Office of Civil Rights, and was consistent with the recommendations made to the Secretary in September 2002, by the Working Group on Establishing the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. The Working Group sought input from USDA mission areas and agency management officials and recommended that actions be taken to clearly define roles and responsibilities and eliminate overlap between the Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of Civil Rights.

The first incumbent of the position of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights was appointed on April 1, 2003, and the functions within the USDA Office of Civil Rights, as well as the Office of Outreach, the Diversity Advisory Council support function, the 1890 Task Force support function, and conflict resolution activities, were assigned to the new Assistant Secretary. These transfers created a proactive civil rights agenda placing a greater emphasis on prevention of civil rights complaints. A recent reorganization within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights resulted in greater integration of all civil rights components.

As a result of the transfer of functions to the Office of Civil Rights, and to ensure an effective means of carrying out the *USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2002-2007*, we made revisions to the mission, vision, and values of the Office of Civil Rights.

When we began the design of the Strategic Plan, we had two initial objectives. We wanted the plan to broadly encompass the full range of our mission and responsibilities, and we wanted to focus on performance and results. We believe that the plan fulfills both objectives. Over several months, we held a series of meetings to talk about our strategic direction. Together program executives and managers as well as stakeholders worked to meld our strategic direction into actionable goals and objectives, with clear program performance expectations, measurements and the evaluation of results. These programmatic changes resulted in a more integrated and enterprise type approach to the development of strategic goals.

As a result of these actions, a new enterprise Strategic Goal and supporting objectives were devised to proactively meet the USDA Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives, specifically, to "Improve Human Capital Management." Key indicators that contribute to the attainment of the strategic goal and objectives, as well as strategies and timelines, have been identified. With some objectives, baseline information is being created as a result of the integrated goals and supporting objectives by which progress and performance can be tracked and measured.

In keeping with the Department's strategic framework, the Strategic Plan focuses on programmatic goals and objectives, with a separate management plan detailing specific strategies for the improvement of Human Capital Management.

The Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) has one unified strategic goal that supports the Department's strategic goals, objectives and management initiatives: To ensure USDA provides fair and equitable services and benefits to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees.

As a result of a recent reorganization, ASCR is comprised of: USDA/1890 Program; USDA/1994 Program; Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC); Office of Outreach and Diversity; and Office of Civil Rights. In devising the strategic objectives to meet the ASCR Strategic Goal, as well as the Department's strategic direction and management initiatives; specifically, improving human capital management, a decision was made to use a unified approach to strategic planning.

This approach reflects the Secretary's priorities of: collaboration, coordination and communication among USDA agencies and offices on its strategic direction; ensuring ASCR is results oriented; holding managers accountable for results; linkage to the annual performance plan, human capital plan, and senior executive performance agreements. Further, the approach informs workforce-planning decisions by ensuring the needed skills to achieve performance targets. Through this enterprise approach, program executives worked together in devising a unified strategic goal with supporting strategic objectives, and ensured indicators and performance measures were linked. ASCR's strategic objectives and indicators will be accomplished not only through the efforts of its major program offices, but also with effort from the various USDA agencies and offices that support the programs and carry out the USDA mission. These agencies and offices perform critical functions necessary for full implementation of the goal.

All of the objectives link to the Department's strategic goals and management initiatives, with emphasis on the improvement of human capital, and are designed to demonstrate in concrete ways ASCR's impact on creating a fair and inclusive workplace. The strategic objectives are results oriented and are expressed primarily in quantitative terms or can be assessed through program evaluation. For some objectives, we have devised new ways of measuring our success and have established baseline data to assess our current efforts in these areas.

In other areas, baseline data will be developed following the completion of new program initiatives. While the planning period for these strategic objectives stretches to 2010, certain strategies can be implemented or deleted prior to 2010 with the understanding that the Plan is a fluid and flexible document capable of adapting to changes in program direction and the needs of the Department.

The ASCR Strategic Plan consists of an enterprise approach to pursuing our mission with program specific objectives, indicators and measures in support of the strategic goal. The ASCR mission is to ensure all agencies and programs of the USDA are in compliance with civil rights and related laws, coordinating the administration of civil rights laws and regulations for employees and participants of USDA programs.

These objectives build upon our past accomplishments and broaden our reach across the Department. They are both bold and aggressive to keep pace with the social, economic and demographic trends shaping the Department, with proactive performance measures that help gauge our success in achieving our stated indicators. Our Plan helps to meet USDA's mission goals by ensuring USDA's services and benefits to its customers are provided fairly and equitably, and that the civil rights of its employees are upheld.

## **ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS STRATEGIC GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

ASCR Strategic Goal: To ensure USDA provides fair and equitable services and benefits to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees.

To achieve this goal, ASCR has devised the following objectives.

- Objective 1: Strengthen partnerships between USDA and 1890 Community.
- Objective 2: Strengthen partnerships between USDA and 1994 Land-Grant Institutions.
- Objective 3: Enhance the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Office employees' knowledge of the fairness, neutrality, and confidentiality of ADR usage.
- Objective 4: Ensure USDA agencies and offices are in compliance with USDA ADR regulations and government-wide ADR laws and regulations.
- Objective 5: Achieve an efficient USDA-wide outreach program for all customers.
- Objective 6: Create and strengthen partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, corporations, foundations, educational institutions and other targeted communities to build coalitions for USDA programs and opportunities.
- Objective 7: Increase the awareness of USDA programs and opportunities for the socially and economically disadvantaged persons and also under-represented persons.
- Objective 8: Develop and implement an efficient complaint process that adheres to civil rights laws and regulations.
- Objective 9: Ensure USDA agencies and offices are in compliance with EEO laws.
- Objective 10: Meet EEOC standards of a Model EEO Program.



## USDA/1890 PROGRAM

The mission of the USDA/1890 Program is to attract students into careers in agriculture and related fields; share expertise and resources in areas such as agricultural research, extension and teaching programs, technology development, limited-resource farmers and minority farmer programs, and rural development programs; and to increase the involvement of the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions and Tuskegee University in the delivery of USDA programs.

The USDA/1890 Program will assist ASCR in achieving:

### **Objective 1: Strengthen partnerships between USDA and the 1890 Community.**

One of the most significant means by which partnerships between USDA and 1890 institutions and community-based organizations can be strengthened, and by which ASCR can advance Departmental goals and objectives, is through four indicators described below. These indicators focus on increasing the number of USDA/1890 National Scholars primarily through increased awareness of the Program and encouragement of USDA agencies and offices to hire students on a full-time basis. Therefore, it is appropriate to focus on this major effort between USDA and the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions and Tuskegee University to broaden the pool of applicants for which the Department can award scholarships to students to study agriculture, food, or natural resource sciences and related majors at one of the eighteen institutions.

#### **Performance Indicator 1:** Increase in the pool of USDA/1890 National Scholars.

##### **Actionable Strategy:**

- Increase high school applicants' awareness of the USDA/1890 National Scholars Program by participating in college fairs and other events.

**Performance Measure:** Percentage increase in the number of USDA/1890 National Scholar applicants.

*Baseline:* 2005 – A total of 100 USDA/1890 National Scholar applicants were received.

*Target:* 2010 – A 50% increase in the total number of USDA/1890 National Scholar applicants.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 10% increase; 2007: 15% increase; 2008: 30% increase; 2009: 40% increase; and 2010: 50% increase

#### **Performance Indicator 2:** Increase in the number of USDA/1890 National Scholars employed by USDA

##### **Actionable Strategies:**

- Encourage USDA agencies and offices to actively recruit USDA/1890 National Scholars from the pool of USDA/1890 National Scholar applicants
- Facilitate the conversion of a USDA/1890 National Scholar to a full-time employee

**Performance Measure:** Percentage increase in the number of USDA/1890 National Scholars.

*Baseline:* 2005 – There are a total of 25 USDA/1890 National Scholars.

*Target:* 2010 – Anticipate 31% increase in the total number of USDA/1890 National Scholars.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 11% increase; 2007: 17% increase; 2008: 22% increase; 2009: 26% increase; and 2010: 31% increase

**Performance Indicator 3:** Effective USDA outreach efforts to the 1890 Land Grant Institutions and Tuskegee University.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Increase in the number of first-time attendees to USDA events for the 1890 community through Liaison Officers
- Increase Liaison Officers' outreach activities to the local 1890 community

**Performance Measure:** An increase in the number of first-time attendees to workshops, seminars and other USDA events that enhance the 1890 communities' awareness of USDA programs and opportunities.

*Baseline:* 2006 – To be determined (TBD)

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Indicator 4:** An increase in the number of joint initiatives between USDA and the 1890 Community.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Develop proposals for USDA/1890 program initiatives
- Submit USDA/1890 program initiative proposals for approval
- Work with agencies to develop and implement proposals that benefit USDA and the 1890 community
- Implement USDA/1890 program initiative and USDA/Taskforce proposals

**Performance Measure:** An increase in the number of USDA/1890 Taskforce proposals that are implemented.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 1 proposal in 2005.

*Target:* 2010 – Anticipate a total of 9 proposals.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 2 total proposals; 2007: 3 total proposals; 2008: 5 total proposals; 2009: 7 total proposals; and 2010: 9 total proposals

## USDA/1994 PROGRAM

The mission of the USDA/1994 program is to provide grant funds and encourage applications for the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (Tribal Colleges Extension Services) Program. This Program provides funding for the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions to conduct non-traditional education and outreach activities to help meet the needs of the Native American people, and to provide essential services to their communities.

The USDA/1994 Program will assist ASCR in achieving:

### **Objective 2: Strengthen partnerships between USDA and 1994 Land-Grant Institutions.**

Strengthened partnerships between USDA and the 1994 Land-Grant Institutions will help USDA increase the number of students who receive USDA/1994 scholarships and will help USDA meet the needs of Native American people.

**Performance Indicator 1:** Increase in the pool of student applicants for USDA/1994 scholarships.

#### **Actionable Strategy:**

- Increase students' awareness of USDA/1994 scholarships by participating in college career fairs and other events.

**Performance Measure:** Percentage increase in the number of student applicants for USDA/1994 scholarships.

*Baseline:* 2005 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Indicator 2:** Increase in the number of students receiving USDA/1994 scholarships

#### **Actionable Strategies:**

- Encourage USDA agencies and offices to actively recruit students from the pool of USDA/1994 scholarship applicants.
- Facilitate the conversion of students awarded USDA/1994 scholarships to full-time employees.

**Performance Measure:** Percentage increase in the number of students receiving USDA/1994 scholarships

*Baseline:* 2005 – A total of 5 students received USDA/1994 scholarships.

*Targets:* 2010 – Anticipate an 80% increase in the number of USDA/1994 scholarships (9 scholarships).

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 0% increase; 2007: 25% increase; 2008: 40%;  
2009: 63% increase; and 2010: 80% increase

**Performance Indicator 3:** Effective USDA outreach efforts to the 1994 Land Grant Institutions.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Increase the number of first time attendees to seminars, workshops and other USDA events by Liaison Officers that enhance the 1994 communities' awareness of USDA programs and opportunities
- Increase Liaison Officers' outreach activities to the local 1994 community

**Performance Measure:** An increase in the number of first-time attendees to workshops, seminars, and other USDA events that enhance the 1994 communities' awareness of USDA programs and opportunities.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Indicator 4:** An increase in the number of joint initiatives that benefit both the USDA and 1994 Community.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Develop proposals for USDA/1994 program and submit for approval
- Work with agencies to develop and implement proposals that benefit USDA and the 1994 Community
- Implement USDA/1994 program proposals
- Implement USDA/1994 Leadership Group proposals
- Monitor USDA/1994 program proposals

**Performance Measure:** An increase in the number of USDA/1994 Leadership Group proposals that are implemented.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

## CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION CENTER

The mission of CPRC is to help all USDA customers to better handle conflict – workplace conflict, conflict with farmers or ranchers or any USDA customer, and conflict with other agencies. To reach this goal, CPRC focuses on two areas: (1) developing employee skills for managing conflict effectively, and (2) using alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods to resolve disputes.

CPRC will assist ASCR in achieving:

**Objective 3: Enhance the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Office employees' knowledge of the fairness, neutrality, and confidentiality of ADR usage.**

The ultimate purpose for ADR is to resolve workplace and programmatic disputes. Therefore, CPRC will work to increase the use of ADR by promoting awareness of the benefits of ADR with emphasis on its fairness, the use of a neutral third party into the dispute process, and its confidentiality.

**Performance Indicator:** Increased knowledge and awareness of the benefits and fairness of ADR.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Conduct training for employees in the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices on ADR and its techniques
- Develop pre- and post-assessments of employees' knowledge of ADR benefits and fairness
- Review ADR training curriculum and make modifications as needed
- Market ADR to all employees and managers in the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices through agency-wide campaign
- Develop mandatory Ag-Learn training on ADR
- Monitor, evaluate and report on USDA ADR and conflict prevention and resolution activities and trends

**Performance Measure:** Number of employees in the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices whose knowledge of ADR has been increased (through pre- and post-assessments).

*Baseline:* 2005 – At least 100 employees in the Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices are aware of ADR.

*Targets:* 2010 – At least 950 employees will be made aware of ADR.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 200 employees; 2007: 450 employees; 2008: 700 employees; 2009: 850 employees; and 2010: 950 employees

**Objective 4: Ensure USDA agencies and offices are in compliance with USDA ADR regulations and government-wide ADR laws and regulations.**

For ADR to be effectively and appropriately used, USDA agencies and offices must comply with the various laws and regulations governing its use. CPRC, in its efforts to expand the use of ADR throughout the Department as a tool to achieve early resolution of workplace and programmatic disputes, will work with agency and office personnel to ensure full compliance with these laws and regulations.

**Performance Indicator:** USDA agencies and offices deliver ADR programs that comply with the ADR Act, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) 29 Code of Federal Register (CFR) 1614, Management Directive (MD) 110, and USDA ADR regulations.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Identify the agencies or offices to be reviewed
- Develop comprehensive compliance review plan
- Schedule compliance reviews
- Conduct compliance reviews
- Provide assistance to agencies and offices following compliance reviews

**Performance Measure:** Percentage of USDA agencies and offices reviewed that are in full compliance with the ADR Act, EEOC's 29 CFR 1614; MD-110, and USDA ADR regulations.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

## OFFICE OF OUTREACH

The mission of the Office of Outreach is to provide national leadership and coordination for programs and services across USDA to ensure equal and timely access to USDA programs for all constituents, with emphasis on the underserved.

The Office of Outreach will assist ASCR in achieving:

**Objective 5: Achieve an efficient USDA-wide outreach program for all customers.**

**Performance Indicator:** Effective outreach efforts to socially and economically disadvantaged persons.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Convene Outreach Planning Working Group
- Develop and submit into clearance process a *Departmental Manual/Regulation* that includes the development of basic principles of outreach
- Design the framework for comprehensive/integrated outreach planning to include development of basic principles of outreach
- Create a coordinated/integrated USDA outreach plan with milestones
- Incorporate information from the “Section 10798 report” and other reports into the comprehensive outreach plan
- Secure approval, publish and disseminate the outreach plan
- Implement and execute the outreach plan
- Track USDA agency compliance with comprehensive outreach plan
- Provide workshops on USDA programs and services
- Provide technical assistance and training workshops on USDA programs and services to socially and economically disadvantaged persons who have never attended a USDA workshop or received technical assistance.

**Performance Measure 1:** Number of socially and economically disadvantaged persons who are first-time attendees at workshops on USDA programs and benefits.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Measure 2:** Number of socially and economically disadvantaged persons who are first-time recipients of technical assistance and attendees at training workshops on USDA program application and participation requirements.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

**Objective 6: Create and strengthen partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, corporations, foundations, educational institutions and other targeted communities to build coalitions for USDA programs and opportunities.**

Office of Outreach will proactively work with community and faith-based organizations, minority-serving colleges and universities, as well as other governmental agencies to promote partnerships and strategic solutions to outreach challenges.

**Performance Indicator:** Stronger partnerships that ensure equal and timely access to USDA programs and opportunities.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Define USDA partnerships
- Conduct activities that identify barriers that impede on the trust level between USDA and its customers. Once identified, work with USDA agencies and customers to identify solutions
- Facilitate joint meetings of the partners and USDA Officials
- Coordinate participation and attendance of USDA officials in activities and events given by partners
- Provide feedback to USDA officials on issues and concerns expressed by partners
- Identify new organizations-representing diverse audiences-with which to build partnerships and coalitions
- Develop a “shared vision” which supports the goals and objectives of USDA and the new organization
- Conduct activities that build trust, improve relationships and enhance the Department’s image
- Facilitate meetings between partners and USDA officials
- Attend and participate in activities of partners
- Provide feedback on issues and concerns expressed by partners to USDA officials

**Performance Measure 1:** Percentage of existing partnerships whose relationships with USDA have been enhanced.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 30% of existing partnerships have been enhanced with better communication, additional resource contacts, and better working relationships.

*Target:* 2010 – 100% of existing partnerships will be enhanced

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 60%; 2007: 70%; 2008: 80%; 2009: 90%; and 2010: 100%

**Performance Measure 2:** Number of newly established partnerships and coalitions.

*Baseline:* 2005 – A total of 10 existing partnerships/coalitions.

*Target:* 2010 – Anticipate 50 newly established partnerships/coalitions.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 18; 2007: 26; 2008: 34; 2009: 42; and 2010: 50

**Objective 7: Increase the awareness of USDA programs and opportunities for the socially and economically disadvantaged persons and also under-represented persons.**

Office of Outreach will utilize the data on gaps in service delivery and develop effective strategies to improve program awareness and participation. The primary means of delivering this objective will be through two performance indicators that involve the development and delivery of effective



communication strategies to promote outreach efforts; sharing information on USDA policies and practices; and coordinating and assisting in planning conferences and workshops to extend the resources of USDA to the underserved.

**Performance Indicator 1:** Increased awareness of USDA programs' availability and opportunities

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Convene monthly meetings of the Agency Outreach Coordinators, Conference Coordinators, Gay & Lesbian Employee Advisory Council and other specialty outreach groups
- Use the USDA Outreach Plan to establish the Department's annual outreach effort and calendar
- Provide workshops, training sessions and other events on USDA programs and opportunities using a variety of strategies, venues and learning technologies
- Use evaluation results from workshops and training sessions to guide future awareness activities

**Performance Measure:** Number of new socially, economically disadvantaged and under-represented persons made aware of USDA programs' availability and opportunities.

*Baseline:* 2005 – At least 100,000 persons have been made aware of USDA programs' availability/opportunities through workshops, training sessions, and etc.

*Targets:* 2010 – At least 160,000 persons will be made aware of USDA programs' availability/opportunities through workshops, training sessions, and etc.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 112,000; 2007: 124,000; 2008: 136,000;  
2009: 148,000; and 2010: 160,000

**Performance Indicator 2:** Increased awareness of USDA program application and participation requirements.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Provide technical assistance and training workshops on USDA programs and opportunities
- Monitor, evaluate, and report to the ASCR all outreach activities conducted by USDA agencies and offices

**Performance Measure:** Number of socially and economically disadvantaged persons who are made aware of application and participation requirements.

*Baseline:* 2005 – At least 100,000 persons have been made aware of participation requirements.

*Targets:* 2010 – At least 160,000 persons will be made aware of participation requirements.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 112,000; 2007: 124,000; 2008: 136,000;  
2009: 148,000; and 2010: 160,000

## OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

The mission of the Office of Civil Rights is to develop civil rights policy, provide coordination and leadership for equal opportunity and civil rights, provide technical assistance and training to USDA agencies, enforce compliance with applicable regulations, and investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination in USDA employment and in programs conducted or assisted by USDA.

The Office of Civil Rights will assist ASCR in achieving the following objectives:

**Objective 8: Develop and implement an efficient complaint process that adheres to civil rights laws and regulations.**

Any employee, former employee, or applicant for employment with USDA who believes they have been discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, reprisal, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, or genetic information, has the right to file an EEO complaint under the civil rights laws, regulations and Executive Orders. This objective also addresses efficiency in program complaint processing. It is the policy of USDA to ensure that no person is subjected to prohibited discrimination in programs conducted by USDA or programs that receive Federal financial assistance from USDA. This objective consists of two performance indicators and three performance measures.

**Performance Indicator 1:** Process EEO complaints within regulatory timeframes.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Review processes and take actions to ensure that complaints are handled efficiently.
- Institute quality control procedures to protect integrity of complaint process.
- Ensure that staff receives ongoing training on developments in EEO law.
- Monitor and track complaint inventory to ensure that delays in processing are addressed immediately.

**Performance Measure 1:** Percentage of EEO investigations completed within regulatory time frames.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 25% of investigations are completed within regulatory time frames.

*Targets:* 2010 – 100% of investigations will be completed within regulatory time frames.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 30%; 2007: 40%;  
2008: 75%; 2009: 85%; 2010: 100%

**Performance Measure 2:** Percentage of final agency actions completed within regulatory time frames.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 40% of final agency actions completed in regulatory time frame.

*Targets:* 2010 – 100% of final agency actions will be completed in regulatory time frame.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 55%; 2007: 70%;  
2008: 80%; 2009: 90%; 2010: 100%

**Performance Indicator 2:** Process program discrimination complaints within established timeframes.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Review processes and take actions to ensure that complaints are handled efficiently.
- Institute quality control procedures to protect integrity of complaint process.
- Ensure that staff receives ongoing training on developments in civil rights law.
- Monitor and track complaint inventory to ensure that any delays in processing are addressed immediately.

**Performance Measure:** Percentage of program discrimination complaints processed within regulatory timeframe.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 16% of complaints are processed within regulatory time frames.

*Targets:* 2010 – 100% of complaints will be processed within regulatory time frames.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 22%; 2007: 35%;  
2008: 60%; 2009: 80%

**Objective 9: Ensure USDA agencies and offices are in compliance with EEO laws.**

A number of federal statutes govern EEO in the federal government. Objective 9 addresses the importance of USDA agencies and offices adhering to these statutes as they relate to anti-discrimination and employment laws, and contains two performance indicators and four performance measures.

**Performance Indicator 1:** USDA agencies and offices deliver programs that comply with anti-discrimination laws.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Identify the agencies and offices to be reviewed.
- Develop compliance review plan.
- Schedule compliance reviews.
- Conduct compliance reviews.
- Provide assistances to agencies and offices that are not in compliance.
- Produce compliance review report, including action items that are generated by the review.
- Monitor agencies' implementation of compliance review action items.
- Determine whether agencies and offices' corrective action plans are in compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

**Performance Measure 1:** Percentage of USDA agencies and offices reviewed to determine compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Measure 2:** Percentage of USDA agencies and offices where corrective action was needed and brought into compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

*Baseline:* 2007 – TBD

*Target:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Indicator 2:** USDA agencies and offices engage in employment practices that comply with EEO laws.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Identify the agencies or offices to be reviewed.
- Develop compliance review plan.
- Schedule compliance reviews.
- Conduct compliance reviews.
- Provide assistance to agencies and offices that are not in compliance.
- Produce compliance review report, including action items that are generated by the review.
- Monitor agencies' implementation of compliance review action items.
- Determine whether agencies and offices' corrective action plans are in compliance with EEO employment laws.

**Performance Measure 1:** Percentage of USDA agencies and offices reviewed to determine compliance with EEO laws.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

**Performance Measure 2:** Percentage of USDA agencies and offices where corrective action was needed, and that were brought into compliance with EEO laws.

*Baseline:* 2006 – TBD

*Targets:* 2010 – TBD

Compliance reviews identified under Objective 9, involve the identification of agencies and offices that may not be in compliance with all or some of the statutes governing anti-discrimination and EEO laws. CR recognizes that this is the first step toward ensuring full compliance with these laws. Objective 9, therefore, also involves providing assistance to those agencies and offices that are not in full compliance. Following the compliance reviews, CR can better define Objective 9, as they will be aware of the extent of non-compliance, thus, better able to fulfill the intent of this Objective.

**Objective 10: Meet EEOC standards of a Model EEO Program.**

The EEOC has established six elements that serve as the foundation upon which each agency shall build its program to be recognized as a Model EEO Program. CR will complete all six elements by FY 2009, and request that EEOC recognize in FY 2010 the USDA Program as a Model EEO Program.

**Performance Indicator:** EEOC recognizes USDA's Civil Rights program as a Model EEO Program.

**Actionable Strategies:**

- Create self-assessment checklist.
- Devise strategies to meet EEOC indicators of a Model EEO Program.
- Devise strategies to meet the requirements of each indicator to include timelines.

**Performance Measure:** Number of EEOC indicators for a Model EEO Program that are met.

*Baseline:* 2005 – 33% of EEOC indicators are met.

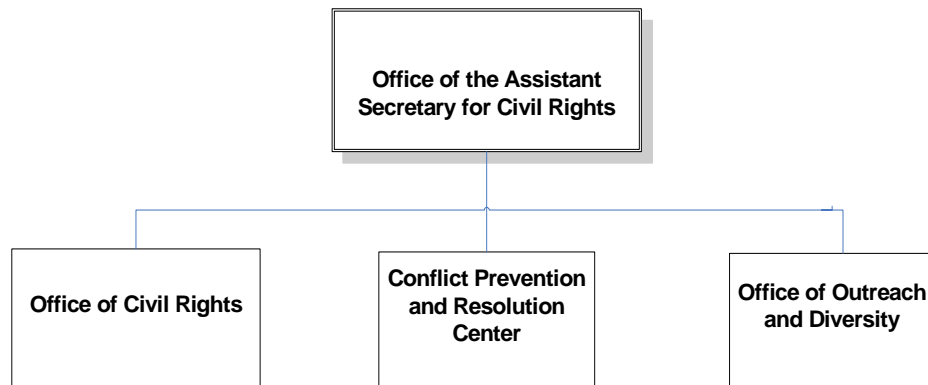
*Targets:* 2009 – 100% of EEOC indicators will be met.

*Incremental Targets:* 2006: 50%; 2007: 67%; 2008: 83%; and 2009: 100%

## **APPENDIX A: ASCR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**United States Department of Agriculture  
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights**

**Approved on: July 12, 2005**



## APPENDIX B: CROSS-CUTTING PROGRAMS

ASCR’s program specific responsibilities cross many jurisdictional lines—within USDA, with other Federal agencies, and with other external partners. These partnerships have significant involvement in the success of ASCR achieving its established goal and objectives.

<b>Cross-cutting Programs</b>		
<b>Goal: To ensure USDA provides fair and equitable services and benefits to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees.</b>		
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Within USDA</b>	<b>External Partners</b>
<b>1</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	1890 Land-Grant Institutions and Tuskegee University; 1890 Taskforce; other 1890 partners
<b>2</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	1994 Land-Grant Institutions; American Indian Higher Education Consortium; other 1994 partners
<b>3</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	
<b>4</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	
<b>5</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	Community and faith-based organizations; corporations; foundations; educational institutions
<b>6</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	Community and faith-based organizations; corporations; foundations; educational institutions
<b>7</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	Community and faith-based organizations; corporations; foundations; educational institutions
<b>8</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	
<b>9</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	
<b>10</b>	All USDA Agencies, Office of the Secretary and Departmental Offices	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

## **APPENDIX C: SECRETARY'S CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT**

### **Civil Rights Policy Statement**

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

As Secretary of Agriculture, I am firmly committed to ensuring the civil rights of all of USDA's customers and employees. Each person shall be treated with respect, dignity and equality. It is a standard I will continue to follow, and I expect each USDA employee to embrace this important commitment.

All employees and customers of USDA shall be free from reprisal or discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or familial status, political beliefs, parental status, receipt of public assistance, or protected genetic information.

By our words and actions, each of us must demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunity for all individuals. We must strive for a workplace that respects differences and embraces diversity. Our programs and services must be accessible and delivered to all of our customers fairly and with dignity. There can be no exceptions or excuses. Together, we will continue to make the "People's Department" truly worthy of Abraham Lincoln's great vision.

Mike Johanns  
Secretary